TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE Transcriber's Office FLOOR DEBATE

May 29, 2001 LB 85

severability clause so that that could take care of any questions that might be had. I would strenuously hope that you would not adopt the Wickersham amendment. What I would like to do for just a moment is to go back to Senator Tyson's question for a minute or two, if I could. And, you know, when we were having the committee hearing Steve Grabowski, from the Fraternal Order of Police, Nebraska Fraternal Order of Police, came in. He represents more than 2,100 police officers, sheriffs, sheriffs, corrections officers and federal police officers statewide. He's also a lieutenant on the Sarpy County Sheriff's Department and has been in law enforcement for 26 years. basically, I guess, what I wanted to tell you about him is that their concern was not so much money, Senator Tyson, as it was safety. He said that some of the concerns they have...well, first of all they've seen some of the atrocities that have happened in prisons across the country, but their concern is that officers aren't trained to work in private prisons, or if they are they're trained very little. The money saved in these prisons also, which you know they want to sell them on a cost-effective basis, and the money saved usually is then in personnel costs. So that if you work around any of these kind of provisions or prisons, you know that they may not have as many staffers as they might have in a regular prison setting. They also might not be paying as much. I remember reading some material where some states are lowering the age at which prison quards can actually be hired now, because they're having trouble getting prison guards. And that's true for our state prisons as well as for the private prisons. But the privates are lowering the ages at which they hire some of these guards. And that's, me, somewhat disturbing because I'm not sure a 19-, 20-year-old has the moxie, the maturity, the wherewithal to deal with some of the problems that you encounter in a prison So, his main thing was he wanted to make sure that setting. people who would be working in such a setting would have the training they need to provide for their own safety as well as the safety of the inmates. And he never did really say anything But my staffer has reminded me that on page 9 about costs. actually of the amendment there is some language in there which I think would be of interest to you. And it says, no contract authorized pursuant to this section shall be awarded until the private prison contractor demonstrates to the satisfaction of